CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SECOND MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 24 February 1970, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. H. KHALLAF (United Arab Republic)

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Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (United Arab Republic): I declare open the 452nd plenary meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. Mr. NATORF (Poland): At the outset I should like to express my appreciation to all representatives who have kindly welcomed me as the leader of the Polish delegation in this extremely important Committee. I am very happy to note that a large number of representatives seated around this table are old acquaintances of mine with whom I have already had the pleasure of working in different organs of the United Nations. Therefore I need not repeat how happy I shall be to co-operate with all representatives in the fulfilment of the tasks before this Committee.

3. I should like to express the strong belief of the Polish delegation that we are beginning a session in which substantial progress will be made in the field of disarmament. In stating this, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the hopes enunciated in this room last week by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (CCD/PV.450, para. 22). Knowing his overloaded time-table, we deeply appreciate the fact that he decided to underline the responsibilities of our Committee by coming here to speak to us. Let me then again express the hope that we shall all intensify our work in response to the Secretary-General's appeal, so that in this first year of the Disarmament Decade we shall be able to report to the General Assembly on disarmament solutions arrived at in the course of this session.

4. When we mention a new decade our thoughts automatically turn to the previous one in order to evaluate whether the work of this Committee has given the expected results. Although our ultimate goal -- general and complete disarmament -- remains far away, we must always keep it in mind. We realize by now that what has been achieved so far is only a beginning. We also know that we are not going to achieve general and complete disarmament in a year or two. We know that while we continue to search for it we must take steps that will make this world a less dangerous place to live in.

5. The decade we have just left saw a number of important achievements in the field of disarmament. Of all the agreements arrived at in the field of our Committee's responsibility, the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*) is by far the most important. Poland, as one of the active constructors of the non-proliferation Treaty, considers it a focal instrument for attaining an acceptable balance of the mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers. We consider the Treaty as an

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instrument which offers the best attainable framework we are likely to have for preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons and at the same time giving an impetus to a cessation of the nuclear arms race and opening the way to nuclear disarmament.

6. It is obvious that the Polish Government, which signed the non-proliferation Treaty on the first day that document was opened for signature and ratified it in the spring of 1969, welcomed the decision on the part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America to meet for the strategic arms limitation talks as the most important outcome of the non-proliferation Treaty and the most responsible beginning of the implementation of its article VI. I think it is no exaggeration to say that the positive outcome of those discussions will affect the international situation as a whole and the future of disarmament negotiations. In this respect, too, we fully share the view expressed in this Committee by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 18 February (CCD/PV.450, paras. 23, 24).

7. Moving now to the technological field, I should like to draw the attention of this Committee to the fact that in the near future plutonium, one of the basic ingredients of nuclear weapons, will become a common industrial product as the result of the development of the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The presence of vast amounts of fissionable material in many countries will, if uncontrolled -- and I stress the words "if uncontrolled" -- create a serious potential threat to international security and could easily defeat the whole purpose of the non-proliferation effort.

8. In our opinion, a similar danger resides also in the possible military applications of products obtained from the gas centrifuge method of producing enriched uranium, if not adequately safeguarded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As we all know, this process can be used to produce nuclear-weapon grade uranium. The Conference is well aware of the fact that the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the German Federal Republic are negotiating an agreement to collaborate in the development and exploitation of this process. On several occasions we have paid tribute to the United Kingdom for its contribution to the preparation of and the support it has given to the non-proliferation Treaty. The same is true in the case of the Netherlands. Unfortunately we cannot pass the same judgement on the third State party to this project.

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9. In addition, we fail to understand the relative haste in the implementation of this project, especially in the light of the decision of the thirteenth General Conference of the IAEA, where the question of a fund of special fissionable materials was considered and some member States of the Agency, producers of such material, indicated their willingness to consider making further contributions to the already existing fund when it became necessary. We realize that the IAEA in Vienna is the proper place to negotiate safeguard arrangements under the provision of article III of the non-proliferation Treaty. Poland will do so, in accordance with the obligations resulting from its ratification of the non-proliferation Treaty, after its entry into force. In the meantime, we regret to note that not a single EURATOM country has yet ratified the non-proliferation Treaty. I need not say that the Polish Government would welcome an early ratification of the Treaty by all the western-European Powers as well as the early conclusion of an agreement with the IAEA on the question of safeguards.

10. The entry into force of the non-proliferation Treaty and adherence to it by all European States would create conditions conducive to a further search for regional measures of disarmament most appropriate for Europe. Poland, as is well known, has always attached considerable importance to such regional measures. The acceptance and implementation of concepts such as the Polish plan for a nuclear-free zone and the plan for freezing nuclear armament in Europe would lead to the slowing-down of the arms race in general. If in recalling these plans we take the liberty of recalling also that as early as 1964 Poland made a proposal for the convening of a European conference on security and co-operation (ENDC/C.1/1), we simply want to underline the fact that all those concepts have retained their timeliness, and we do so in order to stress even more strongly that medium and small States can make their own constructive contribution to the shaping of international relations.

11. Speaking of regional solutions, the Polish delegation wishes to underline that the political and economic elements bearing on the arms race have been highlighted in the Warsaw Treaty Powers' initiative, formulated in Budapest, concerning the convening of a European conference on security and co-operation. The most urgent task ahead of us is to create conditions in which no dispute can constitute an imminent threat to the peaceful existence of European nations. Everyone realizes that the building of a peaceful Europe must, of course, proceed gradually. In the first place we must undertake a set of measures of both a political and a military nature which could reduce to a minimum the danger of an outbreak of armed conflict and reinforce the badly-needed sense of security.

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12. The question that needs to be answered therefore is the following: what are the specific issues which the countries of both eastern and western Europe could and should solve as their contribution to European security? It goes without saying that the recognition of the existing frontiers in Europe would help to further the process of normalization in Europe, since the repudiation of claims aimed at undermining the present territorial and political conformation established as a result of the Second World War is a matter of crucial importance.

13. Agreements on problems which I have just mentioned would bring nearer the creation of a system in which the existence of military alliances ensuring their members a sense of relative security would be replaced by an all-European system of collective security. It was with this end in mind that Poland and other socialist countries, following the decisions of the Conference at Karlovy Vary in 1967, proposed the drafting of a treaty renouncing the use of force, to be concluded by all European States including the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic. The renunciation of the use or threat of force could be followed by measures aimed at checking and reversing the nuclear arms race in Europe. That is why we consider the proposals on this subject as remaining fully relevant to the requirements of the present situation.

14. I have dealt at length with the problem of European security and regional measures of disarmament, not only because Poland is a European country and is vitally interested in the stability of peace and the establishment of a fool-proof system of security in this continent, but because events in Europe have a tremendous impact on world developments, particularly in the field of disarmament.

15. Turning now to other subjects on our agenda, I would like to say a few words about the problem of chemical and bacteriological warfare. In the view of the Polish delegation this question is the major issue of our disarmament debate at this session. I need hardly underline the fact that those weapons are among the most inhuman means of warfare. They afflict both military forces and civilian populations; they have a deadly effect on the human environment; they are capable of upsetting the ecological balance of nature; and if used in armed conflict their consequences might be felt for generations.

16. The realities of the dangers were vividly called to our attention in the excellent report prepared by the Secretary-General on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (A/7575). The twenty-fourth session of

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the General Assembly was unanimous in recognizing that this study has contributed greatly to the world's awareness of the disastrous results that would follow if those weapons were ever to be used. My delegation is gratified that this work has been undertaken as a result of a Polish initiative formulated in this Committee (ENDC/PV.385, para. 70). Our further efforts should be directed at two objectives: in the first place, the strengthening of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575, p. 117) by obtaining its universal acceptance; and secondly, the elaboration of additional and stronger agreements ensuring the eventual elimination of all chemical and bacteriological weapons from our planet.

17. Following the initiative of the delegation of Hungary at the twenty-first session of the General Assembly which resulted in the adoption of resolution 2162 B (XXI) (ENDC/185), Poland has given the most serious consideration to all aspects of the problems connected with chemical and bacteriological warfare. That is why, as a follow-up of the recommendations contained in the Foreword to the Secretary-General's report (A/7575, p. xxi), we, together with other socialist States, submitted a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons (A/7655). We are glad to note that this initiative met with general support at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

18. We have also taken note that a number of delegations, while supporting the content of the draft treaty I have just mentioned, expressed the opinion that a safeguard clause would strengthen the main provisions of this document. I am glad to inform the Conference that a group of Polish experts have prepared a proposal dealing with this problem, and after consultation with the other sponsors of the draft treaty we will introduce it during our discussion when we tackle the substance of the problem. We are confident that the question of chemical and bacteriological weapons, as understood in resolution 2603 A and B (XXIV) (CCD/275), will be given top priority in our debate.

19. Another important and urgent task confronting the Committee on Disarmament is to finalize the elaboration of a treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof. The lively discussion held on this question at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly revealed the great importance attached to it by the

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vast majority of nations. We are happy to note that the majority of speakers in the First Committee of the General Assembly, when discussing the draft treaty dated 30 October 1969 and submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the Soviet Union and the United States (CCD/269/Rev.1), welcomed the third preambular paragraph, containing a pledge by the parties to continue negotiations concerning further measures leading to the exclusion of the sea-bed from the arms race. It was welcomed as a sign of the determination of the parties to extend at a later stage the prohibitions contained in the draft also to other military uses of the sea-bed. It was generally felt that such a commitment should be not only reflected in the preambular paragraphs but also clearly expressed in the operative part of the treaty, as was done in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*). This has also been the view of the Polish delegation, and we shall continue to support the amendment of the Swedish delegation contained in document CCD/271.

20. As far as other aspects of that draft treaty are concerned, my delegation is aware of the reasons which have led to the inclusion in article I and article II of references to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone.[1/] However, the Polish delegation understands the concern of those who expressed the fear that reference to another treaty might raise problems of a legal and a practical nature. We have to take into account the fact that a number of the countries which we hope would adhere to the sea-bed treaty might not have ratified the aforesaid 1958 Geneva Convention. We therefore see considerable merit in a clear stipulation of a twelve-mile delimitation in the treaty itself.

21. Finally, one of the controversial aspects of the draft lies in its verification provisions. In the course of our previous debate on this subject, it might be recalled, the Polish delegation was of the opinion that the provisions contained in article III would be technically sufficient (CCD/PV.444, paras. 33 et seq.). Serious concern was expressed, however, by a number of coastal States which believed that such verification might be prejudicial to their national sovereignty. A number of very important arguments were advanced and specific suggestions were formulated by the Canadian delegation (CCD/270). My delegation would favour the adoption of most of the modifications on this point. The debate on this subject in this Committee has demonstrated a large degree of mutual accommodation and compromise, and that is why we are confident that it will be possible to reach agreement on a draft treaty for the sea-bed in a relatively short time.

1/ United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 516, pp. 205 et seq.

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22. The Polish delegation shares the view that there is an evident interrelationship and interaction among the bilateral Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the United Nations General Assembly. That underlines again the pressing necessity of solving one of the most important political issues facing the United Nations and having a direct bearing on disarmament negotiations. I am referring to the principle of universality. A speedy solution of that problem would add a significant element of realism to the over-all efforts aimed at general and complete disarmament.

23. The CHAIRMAN (United Arab Republic): I should like now to speak in my capacity as head of the delegation of the United Arab Republic.

24. Allow me at the outset of my statement to welcome warmly to this Conference our new colleagues the representatives of Brazil, Japan, Mongolia, Morocco, Poland and Romania. I am certain that their contribution to our endeavours here will be as constructive as was that of their distinguished predecessors. I cordially welcome, too, the acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. William Epstein.

25. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is resuming once again its activities with, I trust, a renewed sense of hope and expectation. Though we are all encouraged by the steady improvement in the international climate in many parts of the world, we cannot but note with apprehension the constant deterioration which has marked the situation in the Middle East. Not only do solemn resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly remain unheeded, but also military might is indiscriminately used, making prospects of peace more remote than ever. The family of nations cannot afford to take a negative attitude in face of such threats to peace on the grounds that the world should become hardened by living dangerously. International organizations were not set up to entrench themselves in passive behaviour; for such a misleading philosophy more often than not leads to ever more harm — and that would not spare those who preferred to remain silent. Thus we meet at a time when the hopeful and encouraging signs in the international situation are blurred by the deep and threatening shadows forced upon our region.

26. The General Assembly at its last session reviewed, thoroughly and conscientiously, problems pertaining to disarmament. It has become more and more apparent that constructive deliberations on this all-important subject are not the privileged domain of a few but that many have the dedication as well as the ability to partake in them in a very positive manner. Having said that I should like, however, to warn of certain

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pitfalls that may lie in our common path. Negotiations on disarmament should not be allowed to turn into an exercise whereby the so-called "haves" and "have-nots" bitterly confront each other. It is necessary, indeed imperative, that we all, nuclear and non-nuclear, advanced and developing countries, co-operate sincerely and effectively to achieve our common objectives.

27. The big Powers must recognize the legitimate interests in disarmament of the smaller Powers; on the other hand, the latter must have understanding for the delicate and complicated nature of our endeavours. Though the combined will and dedication of one and all to achieve success would be important, they would seem in our view not enough; for such co-operation would inevitably fail if not given clear and concrete means to sustain it. Such means, I submit, would lie in the strengthening of our Conference. That, let me hasten to add, has already been done where representativeness is concerned by inviting eight more countries, all highly qualified, to participate in our work. This enlargement has been endorsed by the General Assembly (resolution 2602 B (XXIV); CCD/275).

28. However, a mere increase in the membership of this Conference should not in itself be considered enough. The Conference must retain its nature as "the world's principal forum for multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament", as it was so rightly described by the leader of the United States delegation, Mr. Smith (CCD/PV.449, para.12). Thus none of the disarmament issues with which the Conference is seized should be removed to be discussed outside this body unless there are very strong reasons for doing so. In such a rare case this body should be kept informed on the developments of that particular issue, which should at the earliest opportunity be brought back to the Conference.

29. All-important to the over-all standing of our Conference would also be an increase in its productivity. This could be achieved by an improved organization of our work and a better choice of subjects, which should complement each other in a balanced way so as to include matters of high priority together with the less urgent or less ripe issues of disarmament. Furthermore, we share the view that we should beware of allowing the purely technical aspects of our work to come before the political nature of the Conference. While we readily acknowledge the importance of the technical side of our work and the need for experts to advise us on complicated subject matters, we should not allow such an aspect to turn the Conference into a mainly technical body

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at the expense of its principal character, which is and remains political. We must therefore always see to it that a proper balance between these traits — the political and the technical — is maintained, and not allow our efforts to become tied up by too technical matters.

30. A further source of strength for the Conference would lie in the establishment of closer links and the setting up of better co-ordination between this body and those bodies or organizations that are working on similar or connected subjects. I believe we can no longer afford to work in isolation one from the other, as we have done up to now.

31. Lastly, we feel that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament owes it to itself to ensure that the efficacy of those treaties that have been negotiated here is maintained at all times and, indeed, for ever. Since all here share responsibility for their inception, we also share the duty to ensure their survival.

32. In this context I should like to observe that the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*) has been considerably reinforced recently. All the three nuclear Powers signatories thereto have now ratified it, and more of the technologically-advanced countries have decided to adhere. As evidence of the importance the United Arab Republic attaches to the Treaty, my country was among the first to sign it after having actively participated in the efforts that led to its successful conclusion. However, the fact that the aim of the Treaty, which is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear-weapon States, has not found favour with a certain country in our region notorious for its repeated aggressions constitutes a clear threat to the Treaty itself, for if it is not to find full application in this highly inflammable region, that will undoubtedly endanger its implementation in other parts of the world too.

33. Parallel to the negotiations here, representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America will soon meet again to continue their bilateral talks on the limitation and reduction of offensive and defensive strategic nuclear weapons. While Vienna is not to be construed as an alternative to or as a substitute for Geneva, we have to recognize that an interrelationship exists between the work on arms control to be pursued in both these cities, which is expected to generate a salutary reciprocal influence.

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34. Thus this Conference could, by adopting a realistic and far-sighted attitude in its negotiations here, assist the two super-Powers in their endeavours to agree on a concrete solution to the problem of the strategic nuclear arms race. On the other hand, as these talks proceed — in a successful manner, we pray — they will undoubtedly create a climate of greater confidence between the two super-Powers. This in turn will have a beneficial effect on our work here by giving it the much-needed impetus which has been slow to come since the non-proliferation Treaty was opened for signature in 1968. In the meantime we hope that the two super-Powers remain alert to the dangers of baneful speculations which an excessively prolonged silence concerning their talks might produce.

35. In resolution 2499 A (XXIV)/Rev.1, operative paragraph 9 (CCD/275), the General Assembly endorsed the call of the Secretary-General, U Thant, for the proclamation of a Disarmament Decade which will coincide with the Second United Nations Development Decade. General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV), operative paragraph 1, declared the decade of the 1970s as a Disarmament Decade. The same resolution, in operative paragraph 4, asks this Conference to -

> "... work out ... a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which would provide the Conference with a guideline to chart the course of its further work and its negotiations, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session." (ibid.)

36. Although my delegation voted for those resolutions, I should like to caution this Conference against allowing the declaration of the 1970s as a Disarmament Decade to become a mere slogan to be brandished from time to time as the need arises. Though I know this to be far from the minds of all of us, I should like to remind the Conference that the call to proclaim a Disarmament Decade was prompted by the simple fact that this Conference did not live up to the expectations of the world at large. The results we were able to show for our endeavours were rather meagre; we failed to give attention to the problems of general and complete disarmament and we ignored some other vital issues, while concentrating our efforts on matters at least some of which were less urgent and less vital.

37. The leader of the Soviet delegation, Mr. Roshchin, frankly and truthfully stated at the beginning of our session that "in the field of disarmament there still has not

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been any substantial progress" (CCD/PV.449, para.39). Mr. Smith, the leader of the United States delegation, observed too that "It is clear that we have not made as much progress as all of us had hoped" (ibid., para. 15). For this reason, and in order to be truly honest with ourselves here and with those who watch us closely from without, we must first of all study the possible content of such a decade as well as the means of its practical implementation. Experience has taught us that the enthusiasm at the beginning of such a decade could only too easily turn to disappointment at its end, when the hopes that were pinned on too sweeping an undertaking faltered and gave place to despair.

38. Stemming from this, my next comment concerns the comprehensive programme which is to form the pillar of the Disarmament Decade, and we ask, what is this programme meant to contain? Is it to be a tight and detailed plan of action comprising aims to be achieved, routes to be followed and target dates to be respected? Surely this could not be the view of the Conference, for there could be no surer way to lead ourselves and others into a very grave error. On the other hand, such a programme could not be a mere list of items pertaining to the cessation of the armaments race, disarmament or merely non-armament juxtaposed without sequence or interrelation. It would therefore seem to us that this programme should be founded on basic conceptions concerning the sequence and interrelation of the various issues confronting us.

39. However, we are fully aware of the many difficulties that we shall have to face. Ten years is indeed a very long period to organize in advance; and it is not an easy matter to set up priorities for so extended a term. Issues of disarmament proper might not all be necessarily the most urgent ones needing our consideration; and some collateral measures could at a certain stage outweigh the former in importance. However, importance and urgency alone are not the only criteria for setting up priorities; for we shall have to keep in mind our possibilities, the degree of maturity attained by the various issues; and the conditions prevailing on the international scene. In face of such difficulties we believe that our purpose would be served best by showing initiative, imagination and flexibility when probing together the conception of a comprehensive programme, while keeping in mind that too rigid programming would carry within its specifics the risk of setbacks and, indeed, of failure.

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40. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his timely and valuable address to the Conference, reminded us that -

> "Elements of such a programme already exist in the two drafts of treaties for general and complete disarmament presented in 1962 by the Soviet Union (ENDC/2/Rev.1) and the United States (ENDC/30 and Add.1-3), in the provisional agenda (ENDC/236, p.3) adopted by the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee in August 1968, and in resolution C adopted by the Conference of Non-Nuclear Weapon States in September 1968 (A/7277, pp.6-7)" (CCD/PV.450, para.20)

My delegation is prepared to discuss in detail this particular issue as well as all suggestions that may be forthcoming in the days to come. We are eager to mark progress and, should ways and means be found to make progress more tangible, we would certainly be in favour of seeing them applied. Yet let us remember that the success of the Disarmament Decade is not dependent so much on the setting up of a comprehensive programme as on a new outlook on disarmament being adopted by all nations of the world without exception.

41. I do not wish to leave this issue without commenting briefly on its relationship to the Second United Nations Development Decade, with which it will coincide. Is it the intention that these two should proceed on a parallel though completely independent course, with no other affinity than that related to the beginning, the duration and the end of their term? Or is it intended that a certain li : be established between the two? Many countries seek such a link in the sense that resources released by disarmament would be converted to peaceful needs, especially those of the developing countries. Such a link would find its basis in General Assembly resolution 1837 (XVII) entitled "Declaration on the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament".

42. First and foremost on our agenda is and remains the question of the suspension of underground nuclear tests. It is the most important as well as the most urgent of all the collateral measures awaiting a solution. As my delegation sees it, everything that need be said concerning this item has been said time and again in this Conference. It has received our most thorough attention over a prolonged period; and a great number of constructive proposals have been made with a view to helping us out of the impasse in which the Conference finds itself.

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43. It has been suggested that the strategic arms limitation talks are very closely related to the test-ban issue. We do not in the least deny this relationship; yet we wish to point out that its nature does not seem to us to be of an absolute character, thus ruling out our interest in the subject or enjoining us to delay its consideration until success is assured in the bilateral talks. After all, this Conference considers this item in a much wider scope than that in which it might be raised in Vienna; and General Assembly resolution 2604 B (XXIV), in operative paragraph 3, requested this Conference "to continue as a matter of urgency" its deliberations on the subject and to submit a special report on their results at its next session. The Conference will remember, I am sure, that my delegation presented during 1965 a proposal with a view to achieving the cessation of all underground tests (ENDC/PV.224, pp.9 et seq.). This proposal has found and still finds a favourable echo; and my delegation will have more to say on this particular subject at a later stage.

44. Turning my attention now to the sea-bed issue, I believe that all of us here could agree that the discussions on this particular item during the last session of the General Assembly proved fruitful in the extreme. One can even go so far as to say that on many points of importance a certain consensus emerged. We shall have to take due account of these views, which should form our guideline in the forthcoming negotiations on the subject, which seems to us to be particularly ripe for agreement.

45. The Conference will recall that the detailed views of my delegation on the first joint draft treaty on the sea-bed tabled by the USSR and the United States of America (CCD/269) were put forward on 23 October of last year (CCD/PV.445, paras. 109 et seq). Owing to the shortage of time our two co-Chairmen were not able then to comment on these views; but they presented on 30 October -- that is, on the last day of the session -- a revised draft treaty (CCD/269/Rev.1) which was annexed to the report of the Conference (CCD/274, Annex A) and forwarded to the General Assembly without having been discussed here. It was then observed that, in spite of some substantial improvements, the concerns voiced in this Conference were reflected in that revised draft in only a limited way.

46. Since we do not as yet know the pattern which this Conference will decide to follow in deliberating on this issue, we would like at this stage to refer to our detailed statement (loc. cit.) which reflects my Government's position thereon, while reserving for ourselves the right to speak on the subject again whenever we deem it necessary.

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47. The General Assembly, in resolution 2603 B (XXIV), requested our Conference to give urgent consideration to reaching agreement on the banning of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents of warfare. Part A of the same resolution gave a clear definition of these agents. On this particular item we have before us two draft conventions: one on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons, co-sponsored by Bulgaria, Byelorussia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukraine and the Soviet Union (A/7655); the other on the prohibition of biological methods of warfare submitted by the United Kingdom (ENDC/255/Rev.1). We are furthermore aware of the discussions on this subject held during the last session of the General Assembly. We are thus confronted with a vast movement on this particular issue which we must seek to channel into one path acceptable to all.

48. My delegation has had the opportunity in the past to comment on the initiative of the United Kingdom, and I need not take up the time of the Committee by repeating our views. As regards the draft convention submitted by the nine socialist countries, we are gratified to note that it is comprehensive inasmuch as it deals with both chemical and biological weapons. This conforms to our basic position on the subject, which favours the treatment of these weapons simultaneously.

49. Thus, having these two draft conventions before it, this Conference must come to an agreement on the scope of the convention we are requested to negotiate. In doing so it will have to be inspired by the comments made here and in the General Assembly on this subject. This preliminary step is, to our mind, important, as it will assist us in focusing attention on a precise and delimited object instead of squandering and dispersing our energies and resources. In this connexion my delegation has noted with appreciation the constructive attitude of the leader of the United Kingdom delegation, Lord Chalfont, who assured us that his delegation is "ready to fall in with the wish of the majority" (CCD/PV.451, para.18).

50. I have paid attention so far to certain items only. This does not mean that other issues of arms control and disarmament do not arouse our interest or concern. In this respect I would like to mention in particular problems relating to general and complete disarmament which for quite some time have not been evoked and discussed in this Conference and to which we have to devote our keen attention. Thus we must

(The Chairman, United Arab Republic)

work hard in order to convince world public opinion of the seriousness with which we approach our task. The image of this Conference is at stake; and it rests solely with us to see to it that it remains bright and hopeful.

51. Mr. KHATTABI (Morocco) (interpretation from French): I should like to say at the outset how greatly my delegation appreciated the presence among us at the beginning of this new session of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, who was kind enough to make to us on 18 February an important declaration (CCD/PV.450), the merit of which is that it launched the Disarmament Decade and recalled a number of urgent and vital tasks entrusted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session (CCD/275). Having said this, I should like to submit certain comments of a general character affecting various features of the disarmament problem, while referring more particularly to the urgent and priority objectives which must be achieved in this field.

52. Since the publication in September 1961 of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5), little progress has been achieved in this field, which is both vital and of the utmost priority for the security and peace of the world. Despite the importance of certain measures adopted in the nuclear field, such as the partial test-ban Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1), the Treaty on the peaceful uses of outer space (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI)), and the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*), a heavy task still remains to be accomplished. Unfortunately general and complete disarmament appears more and more to be an idealistic and distant objective. The race in all kinds of arms has not ceased its accelerated rate of development, and expenditure on arms breaks a new record every year. According to an inquiry reproduced in the UNESCO Courrier of January 1970, it will reach the astronomical figure of 4,000 million dollars during the next ten years -- the period corresponding to the Disarmament Decade.

53. Nuclear disarmament, which constitutes the major preoccupation of the international community, has not achieved any substantial progress. Mr. Smith of the United States said to us in his statement on 17 February that the sixties "saw a continuing refinement and deployment of nuclear weapons and extraordinary development of strategic delivery systems, both offensive and defensive" (CCD/PV.449, para.15). In the same field it should be noted that the underground tests of nuclear weapons have continued to create apprehension and disquiet in all countries of the world. Speaking at our

(Mr. Khattabi, Morocco)

meeting on 18 February Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, recalled an aspect which seemed "particularly disturbing, namely that of radioactive leakages from underground nuclear explosions" (CCD/PV.450, para.42), of which a certain number -- nineteen according to the Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (p.250) -- had taken place after the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty of 1963.

54. The speakers who have preceded me have referred brilliantly to a certain number of resolutions and draft treaties or conventions before the Conference. They have stressed in a specific way the urgent tasks which the Conference is called upon to fulfil during the course of this first year of the Disarmament Decade. My delegation shares the view of all those who feel that an absolute priority should be given by the Committee on Disarmament to nuclear disarmament and to the progressive elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and bacteriological weapons, without losing sight of our final objective, which is general and complete disarmament. Within that framework we believe that the Conference should redouble its efforts in order to achieve, during this session, an agreement on the question of the sea-bed and the ocean floor.

55. My delegation submitted during the last session a number of suggestions (CCD/PV.445, paras. 161-174) on the subject of the draft treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof submitted by the Soviet Union and the United States (CCD/269/Rev.1). However, we are ready to contribute to a rapid achievement of an agreement on this important question. In any case, as Mr. Roshchin, the representative of the USSR, has said, "at the present time it is important to prevent the entry into force of the treaty from being delayed for reasons which have no direct bearing on the aims and purposes of the treaty" (CCD/PV.449, para.53). During the discussion on this very question of the sea-bed one sometimes had the impression that it was no longer a question of finding the means of halting the race in the field of weapons of mass destruction, but simply one of limiting the geographical scope and fixing the area within which those arms should be placed.

56. Another important question to which we should grant particular priority this year in our debates is that of chemical and biological agents, the use of which for military purposes would be an inhuman act and an atrocious crime that would lead deliberately and without forewarning to the destruction of all living matter in the world, while our civilization would lose all its moral values, its creative force and the whole reason for its existence.

(Mr. Khattabi, Morocco)

57. This vitally important question was considered with particular attention last year by the members of this Committee as a result of the submission by the Secretary-General of a report on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use (A/7575), and by the United Kingdom of a draft convention (ENDC/255/Rev.1), which gave us a basis for discussion and evaluation. We now have before us another draft convention submitted at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly by the Governments of the nine socialist countries (A/7655).

58. At our meeting of 17 February Mr. Roshchin referred to that draft convention and recalled to us the point of view of his Government on the banning and elimination of chemical and bacteriological means of warfare (CCD/PV.449, paras. 41 et seq.). Before that Mr. Smith had expressed the point of view of his Government on this question and recalled the decisions announced last November by the President of the United States of America concerning both the objectives and the policy of his country in the field of chemical and bacteriological weapons (ibid., paras.24 et seq.). At first glance it would appear that our task is not an easy one in view of the apparent divergence of views on this question. Nevertheless we may hope that a careful and attentive analysis of all opinions expressed and all the documents before us will lead us to the discovery of all possible approaches and then to rapid agreement on the elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

59. The banning of underground nuclear tests is becoming a more and more urgent necessity. In the opinion of my delegation the achievement of an agreement on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests -- and I stress the word "comprehensive", which covers both the scope of the ban and all the countries possessing nuclear weapons -- would be an excellent beginning for the Disarmament Decade and would represent considerable progress in nuclear disarmament.

60. In his important statement made to this Conference, U Thant referred to the relationship between the bilateral negotiations on the limitation of strategic arms and the banning of underground nuclear tests (CCD/PV.450, para.18). In the opinion of my delegation, that pertinent comment could mean two things: that agreement achieved within this Committee on a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests would certainly contribute to progress in the Soviet-United States negotiations that have already had a good start in Helsinki. In this connexion I should like to say that we welcome

(Mr. Khattabi, Morocco)

with considerable satisfaction, and with no less hope, the preliminary strategic discussions between the two great Powers which began in December last, and hope that those negotiations, when resumed next April, will result in an agreement to limit strategic arms and consequently in the cessation of the nuclear arms race in the near future.

61. Another aspect of the disarmanent problem that has often been forgotten is that of conventional non-nuclear weapons. That problem was referred to recently by Mr. Smith (CCD/PV.449, paras. 35, 36), Mrs. Myrdal (CCD/PV.450, paras. 55, 56) and Lord Chalfont (CCD/PV.451, para. 15). The representative of the United States stressed quite clearly that "Measured in money, conventional weapons account for the major share of the world's military outlays and drain away resources critically needed for economic and social development" (CCD/PV.449, para. 35). The representative of Sweden referred to another aspect of this question linked to "the trade in Arms" -- to use her own expression -- and stressed that "Competition by the supplier countries is furthermore often increased by a desire to seek political influence among the customers." (CCD/PV.450, para. 56)

62. That comment by Mrs. Myrdal has revealed the special political aspect of this question, which hinders its consideration in this Committee. On the other hand, one cannot help thinking that this situation is largely due to the continuance of certain armed conflicts aggravated notably by obstinate maintenance of the military occupation of other people's territories and by refusal to implement the United Nations resolutions aimed at the re-establishment of law and peace. That being said, my delegation would favour the consideration by this Conference of certain aspects of a regional limitation of arms, within the context, of course, of general and complete disarmament and in the hope of a radical cessation of the armaments race.

63. After all those considerations I should now like to note and stress the importance of the Soviet proposal to resume work relating to general and complete disarmament without "any slackening of efforts to reach international agreements in the field of partial disarmament measures" (CCD/PV.449, para.59). That pertinent proposal made by Mr. Roshchin deserves our full consideration, all the more since it coincides with the proclamation of the Disarmament Decade. All

(Mr. Khattabi, Morocco)

this points to the need to construct "a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control" (General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV)). That programme, when drafted and approved, could become in some sort a universal declaration on disarmament which could enter into effect simultaneously with the Disarmament Decade proclaimed by the United Nations.

64. The conclusion is that we should consider the method of work of this Conference, and more particularly the proposals made by Mrs. Myrdal during her statement on 18 February with the aim of increasing the productivity of the Committee (CCD/PV.450, paras. 33 et seq.)

65. In this world of ours, marked by the growing degradation of man's natural milieu, by ever-increasing economic and monetary upheavals, by the challenge and revolt of the young in most of the developed countries, and by underdevelopment and the deep gulf dividing the countries of the third world from the economically-rich countries, the solution of the problem of disarmament and the cessation of the arms race become more than a necessity. Therein lies the importance of the task entrusted to this Committee, which has been called upon to contribute to the safeguarding of peace and consequently to the preservation of civilization, the fruit of thousands of years of effort and human solidarity.

66. Mr. ESCHAUZIER (Netherlands): I should like to introduce briefly the working paper on a comprehensive programme of work with a view particularly to disarmament which is submitted by my delegation today (CCD/276). My delegation was prompted to submit this paper in response to suggestions made by the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, in her statement on 18 February (CCD/PV.450, paras. 32 et seq.). On that occasion Mrs. Myrdal spoke of the necessity to increase the productivity of our Committee and to quicken its pace. One method to achieve this would be to avoid, to the extent possible, the reiteration of statements that have already been made, sometimes on several occasions, containing views which can therefore be regarded as well known.

67. The Netherlands delegation devoted part of its first statement in this Committee on 7 August 1969 (ENDC/PV.426, paras. 76-85) to the basic objective of the Committee, namely general and complete disarmament. It also dwelt on the Committee's programme

(Mr. Eschauzier, Netherlands)

of work in the closing paragraphs of a statement made on 25 November 1969 during the general debate in the First Committee of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly (A/C.1/PV.1699, provisional, p.36). We have therefore ventured to set out in greater detail the thoughts we expressed on those occasions and to present to this Committee a working paper containing some introductory remarks on steps towards a comprehensive disarmament programme.

68. In doing so we hope to make a modest contribution by drawing attention at an early stage of the current session to the broad facets which may have to be considered in connexion with the formulation of a comprehensive programme of work in the context of the Disarmament Decade. Of course, we have no intention of being presumptuous, and we realize that the list of topics covered in our paper is far from complete; nor do we, in raising certain questions, provide all the answers. It simply occurred to us that the preliminary results of our own mental exercise could perhaps serve some useful purpose if presented in the guise of a concise document.

69. I think I owe it to the Committee to make a brief survey of the contents of our working paper; but I shall not tax the patience of my colleagues for very long. The first four paragraphs are a recapitulation of past events and I shall not dwell on them. Paragraph 5 deals with the request to this Committee contained in General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV). It is, in fact, the mandate given to us to work out a comprehensive programme dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

70. In paragraph 6 we recall that the Committee was of the opinion that the balance ought to be maintained between various measures to prevent armament, to limit armament and of disarmament. The following paragraphs deal with those three aspects of the question. As regards the first category, some measure of success has been achieved. As to the limitation of nuclear armaments, our paper stresses the importance of the strategic arms limitation talks which are now about to be resumed. At the same time it is suggested that efforts should be made in the meantime to further new agreements on other measures in the field of arms limitation.

71. There is a close relationship and interdependence between SALT and a comprehensive test ban. The Netherlands delegation is of the opinion, nevertheless, that early preparatory work for close international co-operation in the seismological field should

(Mr. Eschauzier, Netherlands)

continue to receive high priority in this context. Therefore we attach great importance to the implementation and follow-up of the General Assembly resolution on a world-wide exchange of seismological data (2604 A (XXIV)). It also remains our opinion that the question of a cut-off of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes should be examined more closely by the Committee, as we pointed out during the meeting of 28 August 1969 (CCD/PV.432, paras. 52-54). Proposals to that effect were also made by other members of the Committee during our last session.

72. My delegation also feels that, pending final results of the bilateral talks on vertical non-proliferation, new and continued efforts should be made to prevent horizontal proliferation. We think that during this session of the Committee the curtain could be raised on the Disarmament Decade by reaching agreement on the final text of a treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof.

73. By way of interpolation, it occurs to me that the important problem of the establishment of nuclear-free zones is not explicitly mentioned in our working paper. I wish to reiterate my gratitude to the delegation of Mexico for the comprehensive documentation (CCD/268) which it put at the disposal of the Committee during our last session and which is attached to the Committee's last report to the General Assembly (CCD/274).

74. I should also like to recall that after due consideration the Conference of Non-Nuclear Weapon States, which convened a few years ago in this very city, recommended in one of its resolutions the establishment of nuclear-free zones in areas where "political and security conditions permit" (A/7277, p.6). I think this restriction is still very pertinent and that it is for the countries of the region in question to decide themselves what course of action they wish to take in this respect.

75. Measures of non-armament and arms limitation would in our opinion not be limited to the nuclear field. In this connexion reference is made in our working paper to the question of chemical and biological warfare. We also think that, within the framework of the Disarmament Decade, efforts should be made to reduce and eliminate the conventional arms races. It would appear that concrete negotiations on real disarmament measures can only usefully start when the preparatory phase of partial measures and confidence-building has been sufficiently successful. This, however, does not exclude attention being devoted during the preparatory phase to the problems of general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Eschauzier, Netherlands)

76. If, as has been suggested, it is felt that the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles of 1962 (ENDC/5) should be updated, then it is preferable, in the opinion of the Netherlands delegation, that this be done in the form of an additional formulation rather than as a restatement of those principles, thus leaving the standing and validity of the joint declaration of 1962 fully intact.

77. My delegation restates its view that measures of arms control and disarmament are closely linked with further developments and progress in the over-all political world situation; and in this connexion I should like to point out that the work of the Committee is therefore also interrelated with that of the Committee on friendly relations and of the Committee on peace-keeping.

78. In the closing paragraphs of the working paper we touch on the problem of possible studies on general and complete disarmament. Several alternative approaches are mentioned, which will undoubtedly be discussed more fully by the Committee.

79. The last paragraph contains the arguments for and the reaffirmation of our position that it would be undesirable to establish too rigid a programme of work for the next ten years or to assume that it will be possible strictly to adhere to precise schedules and fixed time limits. Of course, this does not apply to the provisions of a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament, in which a certain sequence of measures to be carried out within specific periods of time is of the essence.

80. In conclusion, my delegation would like to assure the members of the Committee that it addresses its attention to the problem as a whole with an open mind. We shall be glad to benefit from the views of our colleagues on how the important task entrusted by the General Assembly to the Committee can best be accomplished. In this connexion I should like to say that my mind has been put at ease somewhat since I listened to the very wise remarks just made by the Chairman, who spoke on this subject with the full authority of one of the most senior and most experienced members of this Committee. I am encouraged, and I think it would not be amiss to say that our points of view in general did not seem too far apart and in some respects are almost identical.

81. Finally, I should like to revert briefly to Mrs. Myrdal's speech of 18 February. The representative of Sweden recommended that the practice of holding informal meetings occasionally should be continued during our current session (CCD/PV.450, para.35). I think this is a very valuable suggestion, particularly since we are about to tackle some new and highly complex problems. These may well be clarified by informal exchanges of views or the hearing of experts in informal sessions.

82. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): In connexion with the fact that a number of delegations in the Committee have been interested in the outcome of the Soviet-United States technical talks on the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes which took place in mid-February in Moscow, we are now able to make known the text of a communiqué published at the end of last week in Moscow and Washington concerning the second stage of those talks, on the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. Permit me to read out this text of the communiqué:

"On 12-17 February 1970 Soviet-American technical talks on the use of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes were held in Moscow. These talks were a continuation of technical talks on the same subject held in Vienna in April 1969. The Soviet delegation to the talks was led by the First Vice-Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Utilization of Atomic Energy, I.D. Morokhov. The American delegation to the talks was led by Commissioner of the United States Atomic Energy Commission T.J. Thompson.

"During the talks the two sides discussed various aspects of possible peaceful applications of nuclear explosions and presented reports on experimental nuclear explosions.

"The talks revealed a unanimity of views on the potentialities of using nuclear explosions for oil and gas field stimulation, for building underground cavities and water reservoirs in regions where required, for digging canals, for stripping overburden in open-cut mining operations, for dealing with emergency situations involving oil and gas wells and for other purposes.

"Considerable attention was given to an exchange of views on safety aspects of underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

"Both delegations agreed that the exchange of views and information was very useful. They concluded that it would be desirable to continue such talks in the future. It was agreed that in the course of future talks it would be desirable to exchange research and engineering data obtained in the course of implementation of the national programmes. In this connexion special attention should be given to the safety aspects of conducting underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Roshchin, USSR)

"Recognizing an important role to be played by the IAEA in the future in assisting the utilization of potential benefits from peaceful nuclear explosions by non-nuclear weapons countries, the two sides expressed their intention to promote appropriate scientific and technical studies within the framework of the IAEA and in the light of article V of the NPT which ensures that potential benefits from any peaceful applications of nuclear explosions will be made available to the non-nuclear-weapons States adhering to the Treaty."

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 452nd plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador H. Khallaf, representative of the United Arab Republic.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Poland, the United Arab Republic, Morocco, the Netherlands and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The delegation of the Netherlands submitted a working paper containing some introductory remarks on steps towards a comprehensive disarmament programme (CCD/276).

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 26 February 1970, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.